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ABSTRACT

The Effective School Battery (ESB) is a diagnostic tool used for assessing school climate and providing a sound basis for planning and evaluating school improvement programs. This paper provides a brief look at the development of the ESB and describes its basic features. The ESB serves for diagnosing problems, opening up communication, evaluating improvement programs, and providing some indicators of a school's organizational health. Many school characteristics cited in the effective schools literature are measured by the ESB, though some characteristics unsuited to measurement are not. The ESB permits development of a comprehensive rather than a unidimensional image of the school. Among the characteristics tested are school-site leadership, use of instructional time, establishment of goals and expectations, recognition of academic achievement, parental involvement, orderliness and security of the environment, performance monitoring methods, collegiality and collaboration, staff development, teacher-student relations, student participation, the sense of community, and district support. The standard of effectiveness is extended to include character development as well as academic achievement. Practical questions about the ESB are posed and answered. Appended are samples of graphs displaying ESB findings, tables of the ESB scales and their meanings, and a three-page list of references. (PGD)

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Using the Effective School Battery in School Improvement and Effective Schools Programs

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Using the Effective School Battery in School Improvement and Effective Schools Programs

The effective schools movement which now occupies center stage in the school improvement arena creates a special opportunity--and a special obligation--for researchers to contribute constructively to the improvement of schools. In contrast to the technical, abstract, and largely pessimistic "school effects" era that the effective schools movement has bulldozed aside, we are currently presented with much optimism about inducing more effectiveness in schools and with a set of concepts that are widely--if superficially--understood by practitioners and researchers alike.

In contrast to school effectiveness research which was concerned with "student inputs" and organizational structure variables such as size, staffing ratios, and organizational control, the writing on effective schools makes greater use of terms such as "climate" and "expectations." Despite limitations in the research base underlying the new enthusiasm and the new vocabulary, the effective schools phenomenon has provided us with (Firestone & Herriott, 1982; Purkey & Smith, 1983), it is now a bull market for school improvement. The pace at which the effective schools phenomenon has washed over American school systems has exceeded researchers' and practitioners' capacity to integrate the newfound zeal for school improvement with carefully researched tools for assessing schools or planning and implementing improve-

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ments.

In this paper, I will show how one comprehensive school climate assessment system--the Effective School Battery (ESB)--can be yoked with the effective schools movement to provide a sound basis for planning and evaluating school improvement programs.

Dimensions of School Environments

The ESB grew out of a program of research on school environments my colleagues and I have been engaged in at Johns Hopkins since 1977. We have been particularly concerned with developing knowledge about the features of schools that lead to safe and orderly learning environments, the conditions necessary for implementing school improvement programs effectively, and the characteristics of school environments and of students themselves that put students at high risk of adolescent problem behavior--delinquency, dropout, and school failure. In the course of this program we first explored the dimensions of school and community environments that predicted school orderliness (G. Gottfredson & Daiger, 1979; G. Gottfredson, Joffe, & Daiger, 1981; Wiatrowski, G. Gottfredson, & Roberts, 1983; G. Gottfredson & D. Gottfredson, 1985). Based on survey data for a nationally representative sample of 642 public secondary schools, our research implied that it was possible to identify a small number of underlying dimensions of school environments that were systematically and powerfully related to school orderliness, and also that a larger number of more specific dimensions of community, school demographic composition, and psychosocial climate were also useful. We found that both researchers and practitioners could more easily grasp the meaning and utility of the more specific dimensions.

The research implied, for example, that global school environment factors such as Community Disorganization and Sound School Administration were strongly related to school orderliness (inversely and directly, respectively). It also implied, however, that rather specific aspects of school psychosocial climate--resources for instruction, firm and clear rule enforcement, teacher-administrator cooperation, and student belief in conventional social rules--were directly related to school orderliness. Although these more specific dimensions of school climate tended to be nontrivially correlated with other specific measures of climate, researchers and practitioners generally found that the more global and non-redundant measures of climate were more difficult to sink their teeth into. Put another way, most people had difficulty in devising specific program based on general factors such as Sound School Administration.

Much the same problem is encountered by practitioners trying to make use of the various brief lists summarizing the effective schools literature that suggest the importance of the "instructional leadership" or "orderly and secure environment." Accordingly, in developing the ESB I tried to focus on the concrete dimensions of school environments that were of concern to practitioners planning and implementing school improvement programs. I did this because the goal of psychometric parsimony conflicts with the goal of creating a comprehensive school assessment tool that has meaning and utility in program planning and evaluation. Achieving the former goal but failing to achieve the latter would result in a tool with no practical utility. The development of psychometrically sound measurement of specific dimensions of school environments therefore became an important goal of our research program.

The Origins of the ESB in the School Action Effectiveness Study

Between 1980 and 1984 our program conducted the School Action Effectiveness Study (SAES; G. Gottfredson, 1982; G. Gottfredson, D. Gottfredson, & Cook, 1983; D. Gottfredson, 1985) in which we worked with practitioners in educational organizations around the country who were designing, implementing, and evaluating school improvement programs. In conducting this project, we shared with the practitioners involved the need for a comprehensive tool to assess the current status of schools, set priorities for school improvement, and assess progress as the programs unfolded. We also wanted to incorporate in the school assessment tools measures of the specific dimensions our prior research implied were linked to school safety and orderliness and to develop measures of the risk factors for student misconduct on the one hand, and of predictors of success in school and educational persistence on the other.

A succession of versions of the assessment tool that later became the ESB were field tested in the schools involved in the SAES, and they were revised and re-examined as that project evolved over the years. The result of this iterative process was the current version of the ESB. In this paper I will not go into the technical details of the development and validation of the ESB--those details are provided in the manual (G. Gottfredson, 1985). Instead, I will describe some practical applications of the device.

The Effective School Battery

A school assessment should perform two functions. First, it should provide useful information about a school. It should provide information useful in understanding what the school is like in comparison to other schools, it

should show the school's strong and weak points, and it should provide benchmarks for planning and evaluating school improvement projects. This information should help school personnel make sound decisions about priorities for school improvement. Second, a school assessment should help administrators and others set priorities and make decisions about the allocation of resources and personnel. It should provide useful and detailed information about individual schools so that decisions can rely in part on the unique characteristics of each school.

The ESB is used in several ways to perform these functions.

Diagnosing problems. Schools typically have available only a restricted range of systematic information about themselves. They usually have standardized achievement test scores, information about promotion and retention rates, classroom grades, attendance, and enrollment. But unless they take specific steps to gather and organize information about such things as faculty morale, school safety and classroom orderliness, student attachment to school, perceptions of the fairness and clarity of the school rules, and other aspects of school climate, they will have only vague and easily ignored perceptions about these matters. Yet the quality of life for everyone in a school and the effectiveness of the learning environment depends very much on such aspects of school climate.

The ESB provides a systematic and thorough assessment of school climate and the attitudes, perceptions, and behavior of the teachers and students in a school. The resulting profiles of the school allow the school to see areas of strengths and weaknesses, define problems or goals, and set priorities for school improvement efforts. Experience implies that in the absence of such

information, schools often fail to direct their school improvement efforts in the most productive directions.

Opening up communication. Schools often experience problems that are not openly discussed. An ESB assessment helps to open up and focus discussion about the strengths and weaknesses of a school because it provides a mechanism for students and teachers to candidly state their views using the structure that the assessment instruments provide. The profiles summarize the views of many individuals, so a school can be reasonably certain that broad rather than isolated experiences are considered. Often a review of the ESB profiles raises topics of general concern that have been ignored or overlooked--sometimes for many years.

Such discussions can form a basis for a common understanding of school priorities and goals and serve as a catalyst to planning. Alternatively, administrators and faculty may be reassured by a profile that shows their school climate to be generally positive, implying that their current practices and programs are on the right track.

Evaluating improvement programs. ESB assessments provide a tool for evaluating the effectiveness of school improvement efforts. Such assessments provide concrete evidence of increases in the effectiveness of schools in many areas. For instance, if discipline is a concern in a school, a school initiating a program to improve discipline can use the ESB student and teacher safety scales and the ESB measures of rule clarity and fairness in assessing the efficacy of its program. Similarly, school systems interested in the relative efficacy of alternative disciplinary programs or procedures can test alternative programs in different schools and use the ESB to compare those programs.

Providing ongoing indicators of organizational health. Schools and school systems seeking to monitor school effectiveness in a comprehensive way need standardized indicators of how they are doing over time. The ESB can serve as one component of a set of school performance indicators to alert administrators to changes in the conditions of schools as they emerge. Such use of the ESB can provide systems with information about the consequences of changes made in schools in the system such as consolidation, grade level reorganization, or decentralization of school management.

An Example of One School's Assessment Results

To give you a sense for the kind of school assessment the ESB provides, I will illustrate its use in one school. I will show you the profiles for one school on the periphery of a large Eastern city's urban area. This is a combined junior-senior high school in a predominantly white community that has gradually been engulfed by the enlarging urban area and has recently experienced the influx of substantial numbers of relatively poor black families, many of whom are on public assistance.

Figure 1 shows this school's ESB psychosocial climate profile based on teacher reports. This profile summarizes what teachers said about the school. The profile shows bars going out from the 50th percentile to the percentile for schools for this particular school. Notice the somewhat depressed morale scale, and low scores on race relations and parent/community involvement.

Figure 2 shows the same school's psychosocial climate according to student reports. The low score on the scale measuring respect for students implies that students do not feel comfortable with the way they are treated, and the

very low score on the scale measuring fairness of rules contrasts with the very high score on clarity of rules suggests that the school's rules are very clear (perhaps rigid), but that students do not regard them as fair or equitably applied.

In contrast to the previous two figures, Figure 3 summarizes reports of the school's inhabitants about themselves. It shows teachers' reports about themselves. Job satisfaction is markedly low in this school--only about six schools in a hundred would have average teacher job satisfaction this low or lower. This profile also implies that this school's faculty has less positive social interaction with students outside the classroom than does the typical school, and engage in less professional development activity. Teacher attitudes tend toward punitive moralism according to the scale measuring nonauthoritarian attitudes.

Figure 4 shows what students said about themselves. Notice that the socioeconomic status of the average student is higher than in the typical school (most of the school's students are still relatively affluent whites) and that students tend to have relatively high educational expectations and high levels of belief in conventional social rules. But the typical student dislikes school--according to the low score on the scale measuring attachment to school--and the typical student reports seldom being rewarded either for academic or nonacademic work.

A brief discussion of these results with the principal and six faculty members implied that the administrator and faculty agreed that these ESB profiles accurately described their school. Their integration and interpretation of the profiles included the following elaboration: A major source of morale and

job satisfaction problems was the faculty's difficulty in adjusting to the new composition of the studentry in the school. (Recall that this school is for the first time experiencing a sizable influx of lower socioeconomic status black students.) As one teacher put it, "It isn't that I'm afraid of these students, it's just that I feel so incompetent at dealing with them." The principal, who was new to this school this year, seconded that sentiment. He said, "My entire experience as an administrator has been in all white schools. I really don't know how to approach the families of the black students or get them involved in their children's education."

Although the principal and staff felt uncomfortable doing so, they decided that their number one priority for their school improvement program would be to start building faculty competencies in providing education in an integrated school and to ensure that they built an integrated school with good race relations. The group began to speculate about ways to incorporate black community leaders in their planning team.

How Does the ESB Relate to the Effective Schools Movement?

The effective schools movement has generated a great deal of enthusiasm about the improvement of our nation's schools. Staff development activities related to this phenomenon are now omnipresent, and the vocabulary this phenomenon has provided shapes the ways educators currently think about school improvement.

Some of the key elements in the lists of features of schools associated with the effective schools movement do not lend themselves to measurement by the survey method. For example, classroom use of instructional time and cur-

riculum articulation or coherence can not be assessed by the survey method--the assessment of these matters requires classroom observation and the scrutiny of curriculum content.

In addition, as D. Gottfredson et al. (1986) have noted, it is not clear that the categories in the effective schools lists correspond to measurable dimensions of school climate. One source of dissatisfaction--and one major source of the proliferation of home-grown school assessment instruments--is in the poor psychometric properties of devices tailored explicitly to those lists. If users do not believe assessment results, it is very likely because they do not provide reliable or valid portraits of their schools. It may be a mistake to try to develop school climate instruments to fit exactly the Procrustean bed of the effective schools movement's language.

The ESB does measure many of the characteristics of schools usually associated with the effective schools literature (Coleman et al., 1982; Corcoran, 1985; Edmonds, 1979; Fullan, 1985; Lightfoot, 1983; Lipsitz, 1984; Purkey & Smith, 1983; Rutter et al., 1979), and it provides the kinds of information needed to develop effective schools. A list of the kinds of features associated with school effectiveness might look something like this:

- o school-site management and leadership
- o maximized use of instructional time
- o clear goals and high expectations
- o recognition of academic success
- o parental involvement and support
- o orderly and secure environment

- o a system for monitoring performance and achievement, and use of data to assess progress

Some lists of features of effective schools also include these features:

- o collaborative planning and collegial relations; a bias for action
- o on-going staff development
- o good teacher-student relations
- o high levels of student participation
- o a sense of community
- o district support

As a practical matter, educational leaders need a way to translate the features of effective schools and the various criteria of school effectiveness into practice so that they can determine in what ways specific schools are effective and in what ways they need improvement. This is especially important because effective schools use data to assess progress (California Assembly Office of Research, 1984). Schools and school systems have available tools to assess progress in some areas. They have standardized achievement test scores and attendance data, and a few schools have usable disciplinary data. The ESB fills the gaps in other areas by assessing features of effective schools based on reports about the schools by students and teachers and by assessing key criteria of school effectiveness for students and teachers.

How the ESB Can Help Assess the Features of Effective Schools

The ESB translates the general features of effective schools into concrete measures of effectiveness to develop a portrait of a school that identifies specific ways in which a school is effective or needs improvement. The following list explains how the ESB translates the general features identified in the effective schools literature into useful measures for schools to use.

School-site management and leadership. The ESB collects information from teachers about key features of school management and leadership. Teachers report whether or not simple non-time-consuming procedures exist for the acquisition and use of resources, how well the teachers and administrators get along, whether teachers and administrators collaborate toward making the school run effectively, whether the principal is aware of and lets the staff and students know when they have done something particularly well, whether the administration supports the teachers, and whether teachers can communicate with the administration and arrange to try innovative practices. These aspects of management and leadership are summarized in an ESB scale called Smooth Administration to give a concrete way to assess the effectiveness of school-site management and leadership.

Maximized use of instructional time. The two largest sources of lost instructional time in schools are absenteeism and classroom disorder. Schools have information about attendance readily available, but they typically lack information about classroom orderliness and student attentiveness to learning tasks. The ESB collects systematic information about orderliness and attentiveness to learning tasks. Teachers report how much of their classroom time is directed to coping with disruptive student behavior and how much classroom disorder keeps them from teaching. Students report on their attentiveness to learning tasks: how hard they work in school, whether they attend to homework and class assignments, and whether they attempt to complete their work in a neat and timely fashion. This information is summarized in a teacher scale called Classroom Orderliness and a student scale called School Effort to provide two indicators of the use of instructional time.

Clear goals and high expectations. Goals and expectations are only meaningful if they are transmitted to the students. Accordingly, the ESB translates this feature of effective schools into concrete form by directly assessing the educational goals and self-expectations of the students and the clarity of rules for student conduct. Students report on how far they expect to go in school, on whether expectations for their conduct are clear, and on how they view themselves and believe teachers view them as a student and a person: whether they are satisfied with how they are doing in school, whether teachers think they are slow learners, and whether they can be proud of themselves. The ESB concretely summarizes goals and expectations by reporting on Educational Expectations, Clarity of Rules, and Positive Self-Concept to provide measures of school effectiveness in communicating goals and high expectations to students.

Recognition for academic success. Rutter et al. (1979) found that frequent use of praise and clear feedback on performance were related to student academic achievement, and exemplary secondary schools have implemented programs based on the principle of immediate rewards for student success. The ESB translates this feature of effective schools into two concrete measures of effectiveness. First, it directly collects information about the extent to which students are rewarded for school work by asking students how often teachers praise their work, whether they got privileges or prizes for their individual school work or work as part of a class or group. Second, the ESB collects information from teachers about the extent to which they focus their principal reward mechanism--grades--on academic work rather than using grades in an ambiguous way by contaminating them with responses to student conduct. The first dimension is called School Rewards and the second Avoidance of the Use of Grades as a Sanction.

Parental involvement and support. The ESB makes this feature of effective schools concrete by collecting information from teachers about the extent to which parents participate in school decisions and serve as tutors or aides, how well parents and teachers get along, and whether the parents and community are receptive to new ideas and help in reaching the school's goals. The ESB's Parent/Community Involvement dimension provides a way to assess the extent to which schools have parental involvement and support.

Orderly and secure environment. A safe and orderly school environment is essential to school effectiveness, not only because it is linked to academic outcomes (Coleman et al., 1982; Rutter et al., 1979), but also because it is an important criterion of effectiveness in its own right (G. Gottfredson & D. Gottfredson, 1985). Lightfoot (1983) has suggested that schools become good by progressing through a succession of stages where different concerns are addressed; safety and security is the first stage. The ESB contains three concrete measures of school safety and security. It collects information from teachers about the safety of the school by asking them how much of a problem vandalism, personal attacks, and theft are in the school; by asking them about fear for their safety in dealing with students; and by asking them about the safety of a variety of locations within the school. This information is summarized in the Teacher Safety dimension. Similar information is collected from students and summarized in the Student Safety dimension. Finally, the ESB collects information from teachers about their experiences of theft, property damage, attacks, threats, and obscene remarks and gestures which is summarized in the Personal Security dimension. These three dimensions provide a sound basis for assessing the extent to which a school achieves a safe and orderly environment.

A system for monitoring performance and achievement and the use of data to assess progress. The ESB is a part of a comprehensive system for monitoring the performance of the school, identifying school strengths, and diagnosing weaknesses that undermine effectiveness. Annual use of the ESB to monitor school effectiveness provides a comprehensive and concrete way to monitor progress in school improvement when combined with a testing program to systematically monitor student achievement and a useful attendance system.

Collaborative planning and collegial relations a bias for action. The ESB collects systematic information from both teachers and students about planning and action in the school. Teachers report how often they are involved in work on planning committees, whether the principal encourages experimentation in teaching, whether teacher evaluation is used to improve teacher performance, and whether the principal and faculty are planful and innovative. Students report whether the principal and teachers make plans to solve school problems, if the school experiments with innovation, or whether it is hard to change the way things are done in the school. This information is summarized in two scales, one for teachers and one for students, called Planning and Action to provide concrete assessments of collegial planning and a bias for action.

On-going staff development. Research on elementary schools has suggested that on-going staff development is a feature of effective schools (Purkey & Smith, 1983), and secondary schools with more on-going staff development tend to have higher staff morale and display more collegial planning and action bias than schools with less staff development (Gottfredson, 1985; cf. Corcoran, 1985). Fullan (1985) highlights the importance of staff development in creating more effective schools. The ESB translates this feature of effective

schools into concrete terms in its Professional Development dimension. Information is collected from teachers about their involvement in staff development activities, their recent training in teaching methods, curriculum content, interpersonal relations, new materials and texts, coping with heterogeneous classes, and maintaining discipline. The ESB scale provides a concrete way to assess the extent to which a school is characterized by on-going staff development.

Good teacher-student relations. Rutter et al. (1979) and Coleman et al. (1982) both found that schools that produced better academic outcomes had more frequent student-teacher interaction than other schools, and Lipsitz (1984) and Lightfoot (1983) observed that in effective schools for adolescents it appeared important that teachers liked and understood the adolescents. Good teacher-student relations is a complex feature of effective schools, so the ESB provides several specific measures of student-teacher relations.

First, it collects information from teachers about their interaction with students. It asks teachers about the frequency with which students ask for advice on problems they are having outside of class, how often they tutor and engage in extracurricular activities with students, and how often they discuss students' personal problems with them. This information is summarized in the ESB Interaction with Students dimension.

Second, the ESB collects information about teachers' attitudes towards students--focusing on whether their attitude is strict and punitive or more understanding of adolescents. This information is summarized in the Nonauthoritarian Attitudes dimension.

Third, the ESB collects information from students about how they feel about their interactions with the faculty. They are asked if teachers treat students with respect or do things to make students feel "put down." Responses are summarized in the ESB Respect for Students dimension.

Fourth, the ESB collects information from students about their attachment to the school and adults in the school. It asks, for example, how important what the teachers think about them is; whether they like the school, the principal, the teachers, the counselors; whether they like their classes. The responses are summarized in the ESB Attachment to School dimension.

These four ESB scales provide detailed information about the quality of student-teacher relations useful in assessing school effectiveness and diagnosing problems in this area.

High levels of student participation. Student participation is widely regarded as a potential source of school effectiveness (Coleman et al., 1982; McPartland et al., 1971; Rutter et al., 1979), and schools regarded as exemplary often have high levels of participation in co-curricular programs (Corcoran, 1985). The ESB inventories student participation by collecting information from students about their involvement in twelve types of school and extracurricular activities. It summarizes participation in a dimension called Involvement to provide a concrete assessment of student participation.

A sense of community. A sense of being part of a supportive community appears related to reduced alienation and increased achievement (Purkey & Smith, 1983). The ESB translates this sense of community into concrete terms by assessing two dimensions of effectiveness.

The ESB collects information from students about the extent to which they feel integrated with the social order of the school. It asks, for example if students feel teachers care about the students, if they feel out of place, if they feel like they belong in the school. These student responses are summarized in the ESB Social Integration dimension.

The ESB translates this sense of community among teachers into concrete terms by collecting information from them about the extent to which they feel part of a supportive group: It asks whether the faculty is cohesive, apathetic, enthusiastic; whether their ideas are listened to and used; whether others care about the school; and whether the problems in the school are so big that it is unrealistic to expect teachers to make much of a dent in them. This information is summarized in the ESB Morale dimension to provide a clear indicator of this feature of effective schools.

District support. The ESB indirectly assesses some consequences of district support. It collects information from teachers about the extent to which they are supplied with the material and equipment they need when they need it and have the space and physical arrangements they require. This information is summarized in the ESB Resources dimension. Other ESB dimensions also reflect the consequences of district support. These include Professional Development (because time allocations and staff development often depend on district assistance or concurrence), Planning and Action (because districts must allow schools sufficient autonomy to undertake school improvement projects), and Smooth Administration (because personnel decisions and supervision of building administrators are district functions).

Broadening the Concept of Effectiveness

The effective schools literature has focused primarily on academic achievement as the ultimate criterion of effectiveness. Yet every administrator knows that truly effective schools do more than transmit basic skills and academic knowledge. Good schools provide safe, pleasant environments for students and staff. They develop responsible citizens, respect cultural differences, develop interpersonal skills, and perform the difficult task of encouraging student autonomy in the face of peer influences that adolescents find difficult to resist.

Accordingly the ESB assesses some additional features of school effectiveness that take account of this broader perspective on good schools. These additional features of good schools include the following:

Job satisfaction. The ESB measures teacher job satisfaction to provide an indication of the quality of work life the school provides for its staff.

Pro-integration attitudes. A measure of teachers' attitudes toward integrated education is included because of the importance of providing equal educational opportunity to all and to provide an indicator of potential difficulties in integrated schools.

Positive peer associations. The ESB collects information about the nature of students' peer relations to provide an indicator of the peer influences to which students are exposed in the school.

Belief in rules. A measure of students' belief in conventional social rules is included to provide a method for monitoring development as responsible citizens.

Interpersonal competency. The ESB includes a measure of interpersonal competency to allow schools to monitor the development of their students interpersonal maturity.

Avoidance of punishment. Occasionally when schools take steps to improve discipline, a needlessly punitive atmosphere is created. Authoritarian control mechanisms may lead to alienation as schools attempt to cope with adolescents who seek independence but who are not fully ready for it (Lipsitz, 1984). Accordingly, the ESB supplements the Nonauthoritarian Attitude measure with a measure of the extent to which students experience punishment in school.

Summary

The ESB organizes school assessment results into four profiles that provide different kinds of information.

- Information about the school based on reports by teachers
- Information about the school based on reports by students
- Information about the teachers themselves
- Information about the students themselves

Tables 1 through 4 describe the dimensions shown in each type of profile together with a brief account of the research base implying each is important in effective schools.

How to Learn More About the ESB

Technical details about the construction and validation of the ESB are contained in the User's Manual (G. Gottfredson, 1985), which also contains detailed information about the use and interpretation of results. The User's

Manual is must reading for professionals interested in school improvement or in planning to assess school effectiveness.

Detailed guidance on the use of the ESB is contained in the User's Manual. The manual provides examples of the interpretation of the ESB in practical application as well as guidance on administration of the inventories involved. Step-by-step instructions for administering the ESB are contained in the Coordinator's Manual.

Some Questions and Answers

A version of the foregoing paper was presented as part of a symposium at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association. The following are some of the questions asked by members of the audience or discussants at the session and the answers to the questions.

1. How can I be sure the ESB is reliable and valid for my intended uses?

   Read the manual before making any decision to use the ESB.

2. The use of the ESB by itself can't be expected to result in school improvement can it? Should it be used in the context of a more comprehensive approach to school improvement?

   The ESB is a tool for diagnosing a school to set priorities for a school improvement program and later for assessing progress made by the program. It is an important part of a school improvement program, but it is only one part. I recommend using a comprehensive approach to school improvement such as that provided by the Program Development Evaluation (PDE) method (G. Gottfredson, 1984; G. Gottfredson, Rickert, D. Gottfredson, & Advani, 1984). The PDE method is designed to increase the effectiveness of school improvement programs by focusing program plan-

ners' attention on the key features of program design they should not overlook and to enhance the likelihood that the improvements are put in place as intended. The PDE method helps groups solve problems by focusing on achievable steps in school improvement so that progress is visible at each step and the improvement team is rewarded for progress as it goes along.

3. Is the ESB for use only with the PDE method, or can it be used with any school improvement method?

   The ESB is a generic tool. You can use it in conjunction with any school improvement method. For example, you could use it instead of the informal audits used when following the Phi Delta Kappa approach, or you could use it with the Northwest Regional Lab's planning model, or with other methods of school improvement.

4. What do you tell a planning team when their school profile indicates race relations problems?

   I tell them to believe the profile, and--if considering everything else they know about the school--race relations appears to be a problem area, that they should consider including a goal of improving race relations among their priorities. I discourage them from ignoring the problem.

5. The ESB profiles summarize scores on scales. Wouldn't it also be helpful to show results item by item?

   No. If you use a device where the items in the scales do not hang together--i.e., they do not all measure the same dimension--then you often have no alternative but to stare at the items and try to figure out what they mean. Single items are unreliable indicators. But the scales in the ESB have been subjected to repeated item analysis so that

we know all items in a scale tend to measure the same dimension. The scales summarize this information and make it more interpretable by presenting reliable (homogeneous) scale scores. The profiles focus attention on the overall summary of results--they give a comprehensive picture. Planning groups can not really integrate the information from pages and pages of printouts on individual items. Furthermore, there are norms for the scales. Users have nothing to go on but hunches when trying to decide whether the responses to an individual item on the ESB (or any other inventory) are more favorable or less favorable than the responses that would be obtained in a typical school. I do encourage people to read the item content of the scales when interpreting ESB profiles. The item content is spelled out in the manual.

6. Can the ESB results be disaggregated to compare the responses of different groups in a school.

   Sure. I recommend looking at disaggregated reports mainly for the student population characteristics. This will give you information about the characteristics of groups of students. You should sort the answer sheets separately by the student groups for which you want disaggregated results before you send it off for scoring and be sure to indicate clearly how you want the ESB scored.

7. The ESB seems expensive. Why is it so expensive and is there any way to reduce the cost?

   Don't be fooled by surveys that look inexpensive just because you can photocopy materials or purchase materials at a low cost. There are always costs involved in preparing materials, scoring the results, and preparing reports. Hidden personnel costs can be very high, and when

materials are scored locally (in a school or in a district evaluation office) you can not be sure the scoring is free of errors (and you may have no normative data with which to compare the results). The costs of using the ESB include automated scoring and report preparation by a licensed scoring service so you get professionally prepared reports that you know are free of errors. The cost of using the ESB teacher instrument is about the same as other machine-scored devices. You can save money on student assessments by conducting a survey of a random sample of 200 to 300 students. If you can draw a random sample--and do not need disaggregated results--use the sample.

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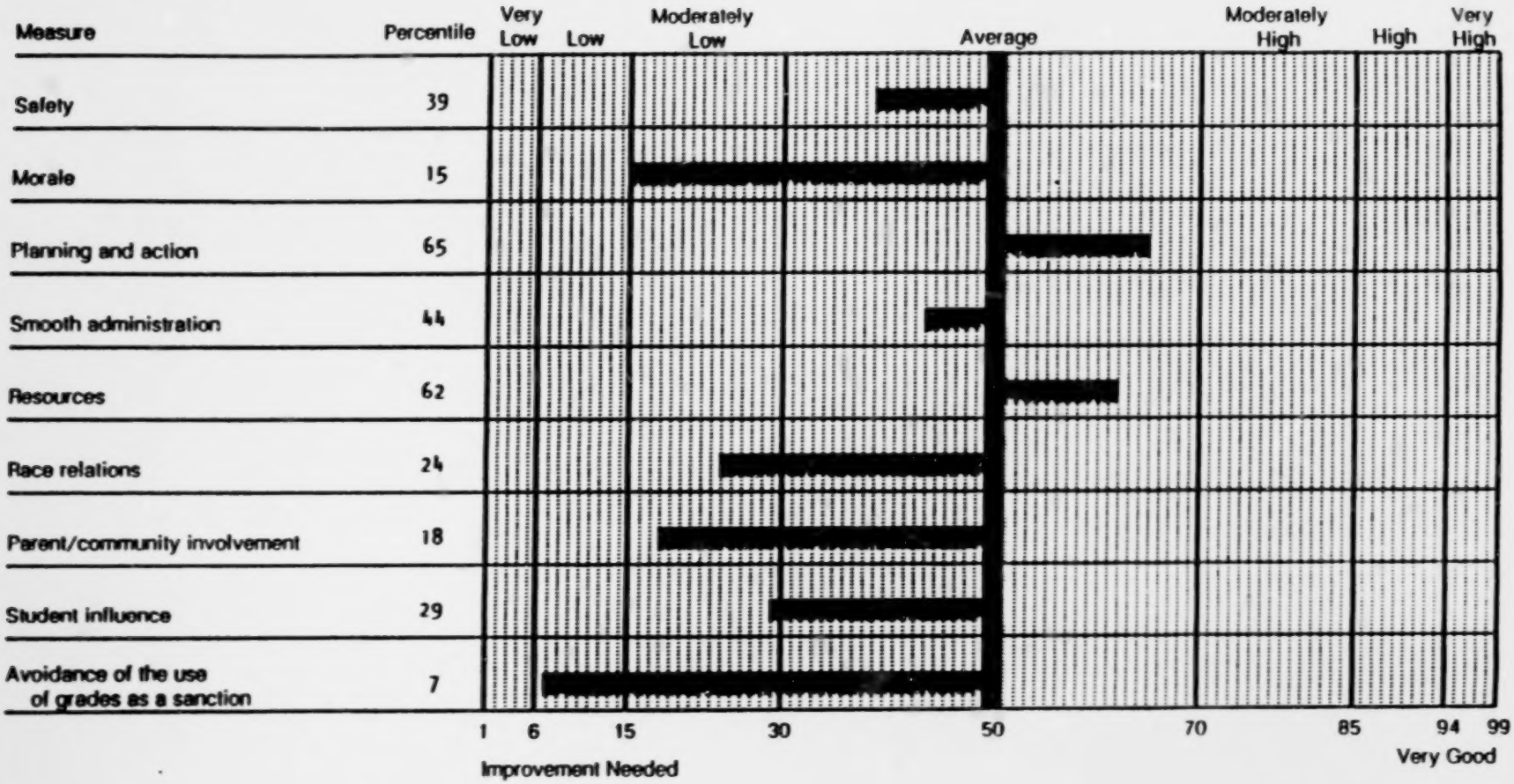
Figure 1

School: JR./SR. HIGH SCHOOL - 045

Date: 03/17/86

SCHOOL PSYCHOSOCIAL CLIMATE
TEACHER REPORTS



Number of surveys scored: 70

Response rate: 100%

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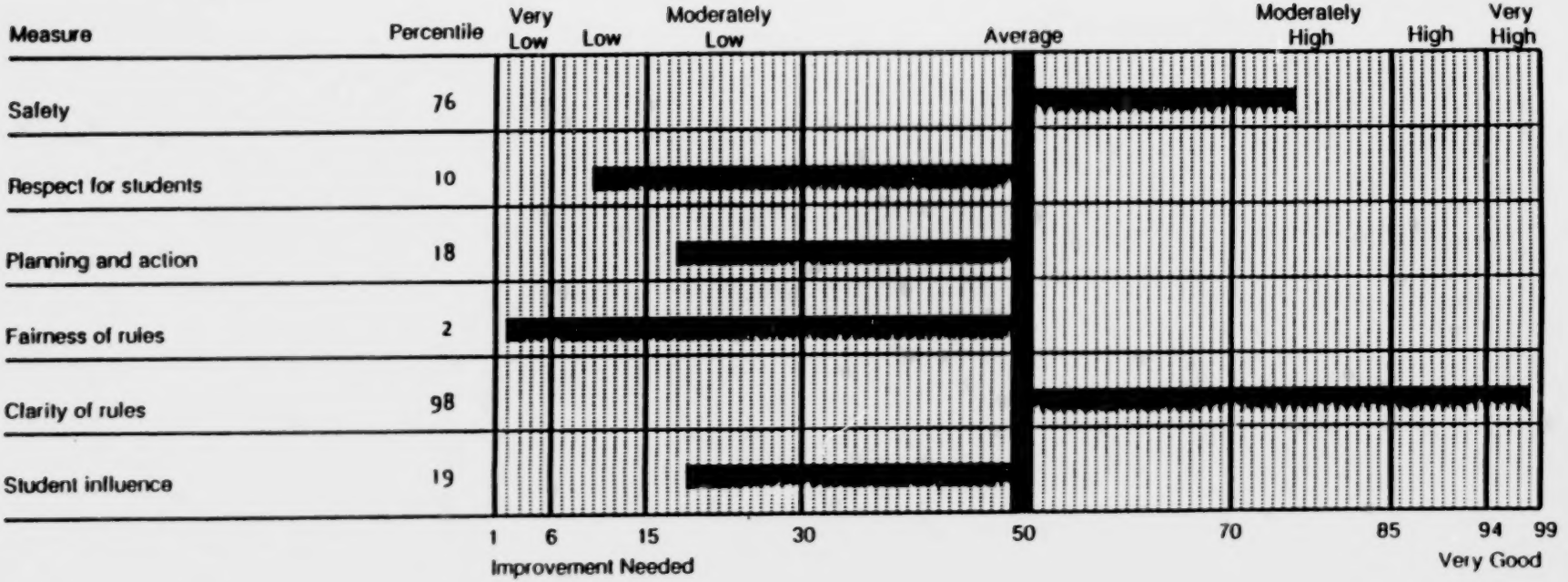
Figure 2

School: 'R./SR. HIGH SCHOOL - 045

Date: 03/17/86

SCHOOL PSYCHOSOCIAL CLIMATE
STUDENT REPORTS



Number of surveys scored: 371

Response rate: 100%

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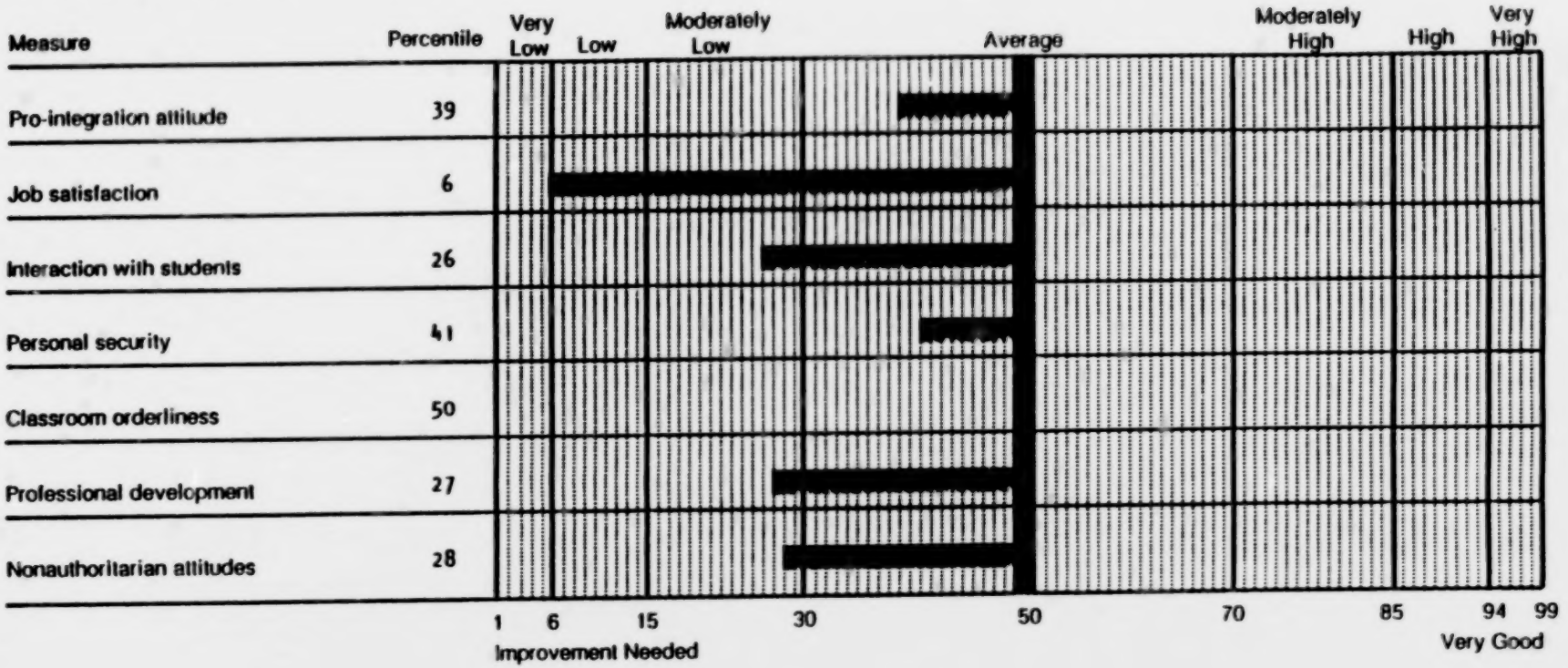
Figure 3

School: JR./SR. HIGH SCHOOL 045

Date: 03/17/86

SCHOOL POPULATION
TEACHER CHARACTERISTICS



Number of surveys scored: 70

Response rate: 100%

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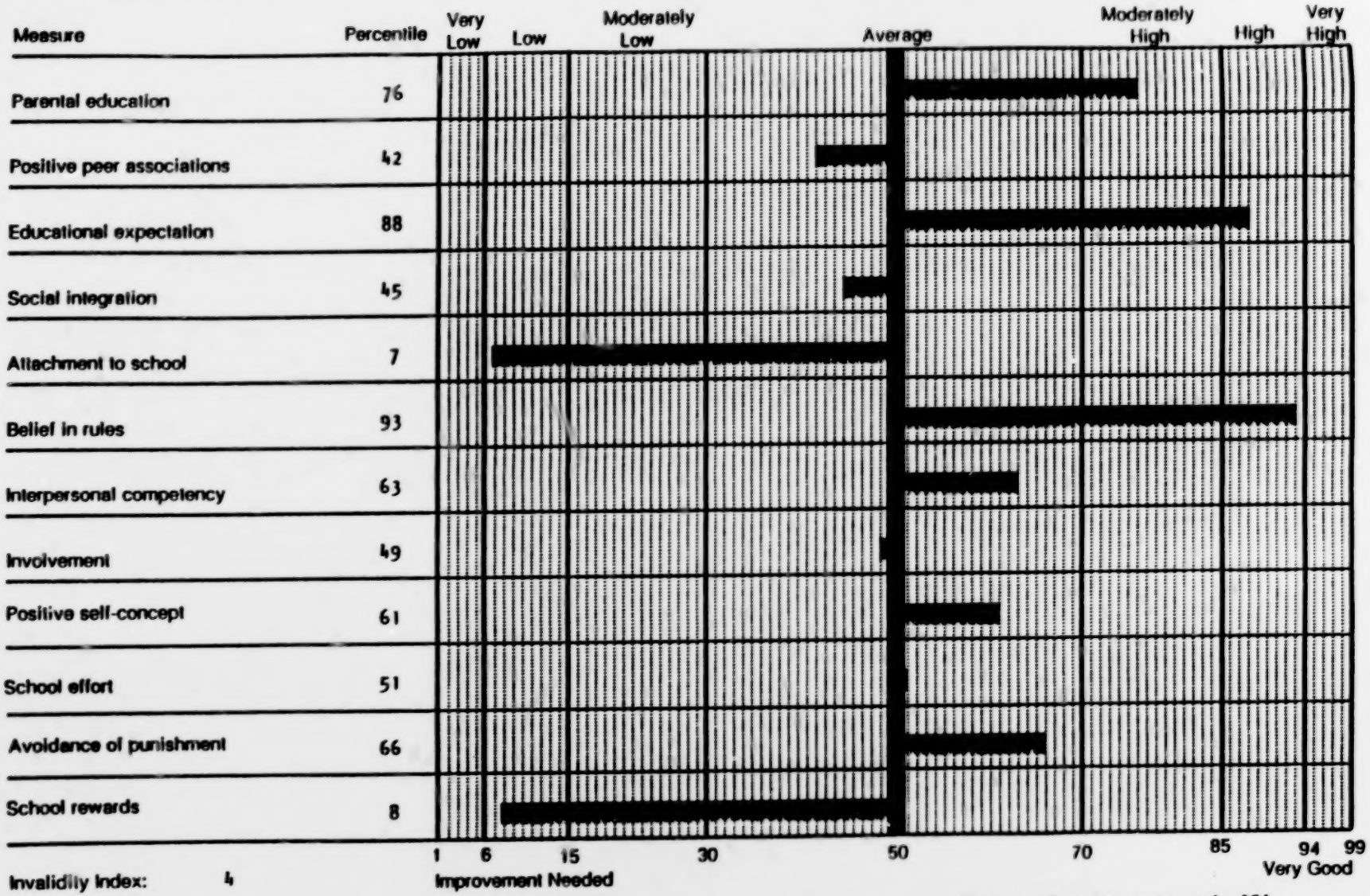
Figure 4

SCHOOL POPULATION
STUDENT CHARACTERISTICS

School: JR./SR. HIGH SCHOOL - 9442

Date: 03/17/86



Number of surveys scored: 371

Response rate: 100%

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Table 1

Effective Schools and School Climate as Assessed by ESB Teacher Reports

ESB Climate Scale (Teacher Reports)	Meaning	School Characteristics Associated with School Success According to Research
Safety	Indicates how safe teachers report the school environment to be.	A safe regulated environment for teacher–student relations (Lightfoot, 1983); pleasant working conditions for staff and students (Rutter et al., 1979; Lipsitz, 1984); few disciplinary problems (Coleman et al., 1982).
Morale	Indicates the degree of enthusiasm of a school's faculty and faculty confidence in the school. A high score means that teachers feel they can count on the support of others in the school; a low score implies that many teachers believe school improvement is hopeless.	A sense of community (Lightfoot, 1983); the feeling of being a part of a supportive community (Purkey & Smith, 1983); a sense of being special as a school and a climate of positive attitudes and high expectations (Lipsitz, 1984).
Planning and Action	Indicates teacher reports of the degree to which the school takes an experimenting or innovative approach to planning school improvements and is open to confront rather than ignore emerging problems.	Collaborative planning and collegial relationships (Purkey & Smith, 1983); clear goals (California Assembly Office of Research, 1984); greater use of data to assess progress (California Assembly, 1984); ongoing curriculum review involving teachers (California Assembly, 1984); autonomy to solve school problems (California Assembly, 1984); awareness of imperfections and willingness to search for solutions (Lightfoot, 1983); clear authority to solve problems (Lightfoot, 1983); clearly articulated and shared school goals (Lipsitz, 1984).
Smooth Administration	Indicates how teachers perceive the school administration. A high score implies that teachers perceive that they get the help they need to do their jobs when they need it, that the administrator is supportive of teachers, that administrators reward staff for doing a good job, and that there is little conflict or tension between teaching staff and administrators.	Leadership in initiating and maintaining the improvement process (Purkey & Smith, 1983); little administration–teacher conflict (Corbett et al., 1984); principal support for innovation (Berman & McLaughlin, 1978); principal leadership (California State Department of Education, 1980); leadership fitting the culture of the school (Lightfoot, 1983); respect for teachers and teaching (Lightfoot, 1983); respect for staff as professionals (Lipsitz, 1984); encouragement of staff ingenuity (Lipsitz, 1984).
Resources	Indicates whether teachers report adequate instructional supplies and other resources or whether they report difficulty in obtaining needed teaching supplies.	Resources for instruction are linked to staff morale, job satisfaction, and school safety (Gottfredson, 1984; Gottfredson & Gottfredson, 1985).
Race Relations	Indicates (in integrated schools) how well different ethnic groups get along.	A concern for the weakest members of the school community (Lightfoot, 1983); reciprocity in human relations (Lipsitz, 1984). (Good race relations are an important dimension of school effectiveness in their own right.)
Parent/Community Involvement	Indicates the degree to which the school uses community resources in its programs.	Parents are informed of school goals and student responsibilities (Purkey & Smith, 1983); parental involvement is related to achievement in schools serving poor minority children (Brookover et al., 1979); parental involvement may lead to greater consensus on goals and behavioral norms between the school and the home (Saignaic & Karweit, 1983).
Student Influence	Indicates teacher perceptions of the extent to which students participate in school decisions.	High proportion of students holding positions of responsibility and shared activities between staff and students (Rutter et al., 1979); awareness of student values (Lightfoot, 1983); reciprocity in human relations (Lipsitz, 1984); student participation in decision making (McPartland et al., 1971).
Avoidance of the Use of Grades as a Sanction	Indicates the extent to which teachers avoid lowering grades in response to student misconduct. In low scoring schools teachers report frequently lowering school grades as a disciplinary practice, thus mixing responses to academic performance with responses to student conduct.	Consistent policies and procedures (Rutter et al., 1979); frequent use of direct praise and frequent feedback on performance; separation of responses for academic performance and student conduct (McPartland & McDill, 1977); ambiguous sanctions lead to disorder (Gottfredson & Gottfredson, 1985).

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Table 2

Effective Schools and School Climate as Assessed by ESB Student Reports

ESB Climate Scale (Student Report)	Meaning	School Characteristics Associated with School Success According to Research
Safety	Indicates how safe students report the school environment to be.	A safe regulated environment for teacher–student relations (Lightfoot, 1983); pleasant working conditions for staff and students (Rutter et al., 1979; Lipsitz, 1984); few disciplinary problems (Coleman et al., 1982).
Respect for Students	Indicates how students feel they are treated in the school. A high score means students are treated with dignity; a low score suggests that students are treated with a lack of respect.	A concern for the weakest members of the school community (Lightfoot, 1983); a caring environment and reciprocity in human relations (Lipsitz, 1984); avoidance of "degradation ceremonies" (Greenberg, 1977).
Planning and Action	Indicates student reports of the degree to which the school undertakes efforts to plan and implement school improvement.	Collaborative planning and collegial relationships (Purkey & Smith, 1983); clear goals (California Assembly Office of Research, 1984); greater use of data to assess progress (California Assembly, 1984); ongoing curriculum review involving teachers (California Assembly, 1984); autonomy to solve school problems (California Assembly, 1984); awareness of imperfections and willingness to search for solutions (Lightfoot, 1983); clear authority to solve problems (Lightfoot, 1983); clearly articulated and shared school goals (Lipsitz, 1984).
Fairness of Rules	Indicates whether students believe the school's rules are equitable and fairly administered. Low scores imply that students perceive injustice or inequity; high scores imply they perceive fairness and even–handed rule enforcement.	Fairly and consistently enforced school rules (Purkey & Smith, 1983); discipline perceived as fair and strict (Coleman et al., 1982); perceived fairness of rules (Gottfredson & Gottfredson, 1985).
Clarity of Rules	Indicates whether students know what the school rules are––and what the consequences are for rule violation.	Clear, reasonable rules (Purkey & Smith, 1983); clear guidelines for student behavior and discipline infrequent but firm (Rutter et al., 1979); perceived clarity of rules (Gottfredson & Gottfredson, 1985).
Student Influence	Summarizes the students' point of view about the extent to which they are able to influence matters of concern to them. A low score implies students feel powerless to bring about desired changes in school practices; a high score implies students feel the school is open to their suggestions.	High proportion of students holding positions of responsibility and shared activities between staff and students (Rutter et al., 1979); awareness of student values (Lightfoot, 1983); reciprocity in human relations (Lipsitz, 1984); student participation in decision making (McPartland et al., 1971).

Table 3

Effective Schools and Teacher Characteristics Assessed by the ESB

ESB Teacher Scale	Meaning	School Characteristics Associated with School Success According to Research
Pro-integration Attitude	Indicates teacher attitudes toward integrated education. A high score suggests that teachers view integrated education in a positive way; a low score suggests that the average teacher may be somewhat insensitive to issues of racial equity.	Teachers who want minority children to learn and believe that they can (Bloom, 1976; Edmonds, 1979); assigning students of different races to work together leads to positive racial attitudes (Slavin & Madden, 1979); effective integrated schools recruit and retain teachers who are unprejudiced and insistent on high performance and racial equality (Hawley, 1981).
Job Satisfaction	Indicates how the teachers feel about their jobs--a measure of the quality of work life in the school.	A climate of positive attitudes (Lightfoot, 1983); teacher interest in students (Coleman et al., 1982); pleasant working conditions, teachers modeling desired work norms (Rutter et al., 1979).
Interaction with Students	Indicates how much positive social interaction teachers have with students.	Teachers available for consultation and provide personal assistance, shared activities between staff and students (Rutter et al., 1979; more frequent student-teacher interaction (Coleman et al., 1982).
Personal Security	Indicates the average teacher's experience of personal victimization.	An environment which safe (Purkey & Smith, 1983).
Classroom Orderliness	Indicates how orderly the average teacher's classroom is. A low score implies that disruption interferes with teaching in many classrooms.	Classroom disorder is one of the main sources of lost instructional time (Karweit, 1983); fewer disciplinary problems (Coleman et al., 1982); an orderly environment (Lipsitz, 1984).
Professional Development	Indicates how much exposure to continuing education the average teacher has had in the past year.	Schoolwide staff development (Purkey & Smith, 1983); social interaction and dialogue about teaching (Little, 1982).
Nonauthoritarian Attitudes	Indicates teachers' attitudes about student-teacher authority relations. A low score implies many teachers have a punitive, moralistic attitude about student misbehavior.	Safer schools have teachers with less punitive attitudes (Gottfredson & Gottfredson, 1985); and orderly and caring environment (Lipsitz, 1984).

Table 4

Effective Schools and Student Characteristics Assessed by the ESB

ESB Student Scale	Meaning	Student Outcome
Positive Peer Associations	Describes peer relations for the average student. A high score means most students have friends who value school and avoid trouble.	Youths who score low on this scale tend to engage in more delinquent behavior, and those who score high are more attached to school and have higher educational expectations (Gottfredson, 1985).
Educational Expectation	Indicates the level of student academic orientation. A high score means the average student expects to complete a great deal of education.	High expectations of academic success (Rutter et al., 1979); a climate of high expectations (Lipsitz, 1983).
Social Integration	Indicates whether students feel integrated with or alienated from the social order of the school.	A sense of community (Purkey & Smith, 1983); social integration is an important criterion of effectiveness in its own right--alienated individuals tend to be unhappy and at risk for mental health problems (McClosky & Scharr (1965).
Attachment to School	Indicates students' liking for school.	An important criterion of effectiveness in its own right. Secondary schools are often dismally drab and boring places (Boyer, 1983).
Belief in Rules	Indicates the extent to which students believe in the validity of conventional social rules.	An important criterion of effectiveness in its own right. Students who report little belief in conventional rules tend to engage in more delinquent behavior than other students (Hirschi, 1969; Gottfredson, 1985) and schools where students believe in the validity of rules experience less teacher victimization (Gottfredson & Gottfredson, 1985).
Interpersonal Competency	Indicates the degree to which the average student is competent in interpersonal relations.	An important criterion of effectiveness in its own right; an aspect of psychosocial maturity (Holland & Baird, 1968).
Involvement	Indicates the extent of the average student's participation in extracurricular activities.	High participation in extracurricular activities (Coleman et al., 1982).
Positive Self-Concept	Indicates how students describe themselves. A high score means the average student has high self-esteem and sees him/herself as a rule-abiding person.	Higher levels of student self-esteem (Coleman et al., 1982); an important criterion of effectiveness in its own right. Students scoring low tend to engage in more misconduct; high scorers score higher on measures of psychological health and reading ability (Gottfredson, 1985).
School Effort	Indicates how much care and effort the average student devotes to school work.	Students doing more homework (Coleman et al., 1982); homework frequently assigned and marked (Rutter et al., 1979).
Avoidance of Punishment	Summarizes information about how often the average student is punished.	Discipline infrequent but firm (Rutter et al., 1979); positive student-teacher relations (Lipsitz, 1984; Lightfoot, 1983).
School Rewards	Indicates how much the average student is rewarded for his or her academic behavior.	Recognition for academic success (Purkey & Smith, 1973); frequent use of direct praise and frequent feedback on performance (Rutter et al., 1979).

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